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## EMINENT AMERICAN NAMES

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THE article entitled "The Racial Origin of Successful Americans," by Dr. Frederick Adams Woods, which appeared in the April (1914) issue of *The Popular Science Monthly*, set forth some very interesting and instructive results. The methods used to arrive at these results, however, do not seem to be such as to establish them as final and conclusive.

It is not sufficient to consider merely the number of persons bearing certain names in "Who's Who in America," for the purpose of establishing the relative capability of various nationalities. The percentage of the number bearing that name in the city in question is the significant figure.

The writer has, therefore, taken the directories<sup>1</sup> of the four American cities, which were the subjects of study in the original article, and has estimated the number of persons of a certain name living in each city by first counting the number of names printed in a whole column of the directory and then multiplying this figure by the number of columns occupied by that name. The number of persons bearing the same name in "Who's Who in America" (1912-1913) is then taken for each city. The percentage is finally calculated of the number of the "Who's Who in America" names in the number of those bearing that name in the directories.

It seems best, furthermore, to narrow down the consideration from the fifty most common names in each city to only those of this number which are common to all four cities in order that any one family may not have too great a weight. The names in each city are then arranged according to the established percentages.

The grouping of names as an indication of race or nationality is taken from Robert E. Matheson's "Surnames in Ireland." It is found to agree exactly with the grouping in the article by Dr. Woods, who classified them from the table given in the New York World Almanac and Encyclopedia for 1914, which table was, no doubt, compiled from Matheson.

<sup>1</sup> (1) Trow's General Directory—Boroughs of Manhattan and Bronx, City of New York, 1913. Trow Directory, Printing & Bookbinding Company, Pub. (2) Boyd's Philadelphia City Directory, 1913. C. E. Howe Company, Pub. (3) The Lakeside Annual Directory of the City of Chicago, 1913. Chicago Directory Company, Pub. (4) The Boston Directory, 1913. Simpson and Murdock Co., Publishers.

NAMES COMMON TO ALL FOUR CITIES, NATIONALITY, ATTRIBUTED TO THEM, AND THE PROPORTION FOR EACH NAME OF THE NUMBER OF TIMES IT OCCURS FOR EACH CITY IN "WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA," (1912-1913) AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF THE SAME NAME IN THE SAME CITY

New York (Exclusive of Brooklyn)		Chicago		Philadelphia		Boston		Name Averages	
E	White	1.39%	E	Hall	0.72%	E	Allen	0.72%	E
E	Williams	1.18	E-Sc	Moore	0.41	E	Williams	0.67	E
E	Clark	1.05	E	Wilson	0.35	E	Brown	0.61	E
E	Taylor	1.02	E	Davis	0.27	E	Hall	0.43	E
E	Jones	1.09	E	Young	0.27	E	Campbell	0.33	E
E	Martin	0.87	E	Thompson	0.26	E	Clark	0.30	E
E	Smith	0.78	E	Brown	0.22	E	Wilson	0.37	E
E	Thompson	0.74	E	Lewis	0.20	E	Smith	0.29	E
E	Miller	0.73	E	Taylor	0.17	E	Thompson	0.28	E
E	Wilson	0.71	E	Miller	0.17	E	Taylor	0.25	E-Sc
E	Brown	0.70	E	Martin	0.16	E	Anderson	0.22	E
E	Moore	0.60	I	Kelly	0.16	E	Young	0.18	Sc
E	Davis	0.59	E	Williams	0.15	E	Clark	0.14	E
E	Johnson	0.56	E	White	0.14	E	Smith	0.13	E-Sc
Sc-Sc	Anderson	0.55	E	Clark	0.14	E	Johnson	0.19	E
I	Murphy	0.46	E	Smith	0.14	E	Smith	0.19	E
I	Kelly	0.37	E	Allen	0.13	I	Johnson	0.13	E-Sc
E	Allen	0.24	Sc	Campbell	0.11	Sc	Brown	0.13	E
E	Hall	0.23	E	Jones	0.10	Sc	Miller	0.12	E-Sc
Sc	Campbell	0.17	E-Sc	Johnson	0.06	I	Martin	0.08	E
I	O'Brien	0.14	I	Murphy	0.06	E	Thompson	0.08	E
E	Lewis	0.12	Sc-Sc	Anderson	0.05	E	Murphy	0.08	I
E	Young	0.10	I	O'Brien	0.00	I	Davis	0.00	E-Sc
						I	Kelly	0.00	I
						I	O'Brien	0.00	I
Nationality Averages		Nationality Averages		Nationality Averages		Nationality Averages		Nationality Averages	
G	German	0.73%	E	English	0.22%	E	English	0.18%	E
E	English	0.69	Sc	Scotch	0.20	Sc	Scandinavian	0.16	Sc
S	Scandinavian	0.55	G	German	0.17	G	German	0.12	Sc
Sc	Scotch	0.43	I	Irish	0.11	Sc	Scotch	0.11	I
Ic	Irish	0.32	Sc	Scandinavian	0.05	I	Irish	0.02	G
							German	0.14	Sc
							Scandinavian	0.20	G
							Scotch	0.06	I
							Irish	0.00	I

The nationality attributed to each name is indicated in the tables below by capital letters in the parallel columns. In some cases a name is shared by two or even three nationalities. The percentages belonging to such names are attributed to each of the sharing nationalities in making the final averages. This, of course, is a serious source of error, since the division of such names among the nationalities is not known. No stress can be laid on our figures for the German, Scotch and Scandinavian nationalities, because they contain so many of these indecisive names.

The names in each city are then arranged in groups according to their nationality and averages computed from the percentages established for each name. These averages, which appear at the bottom of each column, give a fair estimation of the capability of the different nationalities, but are, nevertheless, open to a few minor errors. For instance, the Germans head the list in New York with 0.73 per cent. for only one third of a single name, while the English rank second with a total of 15% names. The final averages for nationality, however, which appear at the bottom of the fifth column and which are made from the averages computed for each city, partly eliminate this error and place the groups in their proper rank.

In order to make the results more conclusive, general averages are drawn for each name from the percentages established for that name in all four cities and are placed in the fifth column according to their rank. Final averages of percentages for nationalities are then made from this column, just as they were for each city. The results obtained agree exactly with the final averages made before and, therefore, are placed coincident with them at the bottom of the fifth column.

The results finally arrived at seem to corroborate the conclusions of Dr. Wood; namely, that in the four leading American cities, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston, "those of the English (and Scotch) ancestry are distinctly in possession of the leading positions, at least from the standpoint of being widely known." Yet it does not seem safe to disregard entirely those other nationalities which rank so closely with the English merely because of the small number of them included in our consideration; for, as has been stated above, we do not know what proportion of a certain name to attribute to various nationalities.

There is one serious, but unavoidable, source of error, moreover, which has apparently been overlooked. The conclusions as to the relative intelligence of various races are drawn from the number of names, belonging to these races, which appeared in "Who's Who in America." According to the standards of this compilation, eminence is very largely dependent upon education, which does not give the emigrants, who are too poor to get proper education, an equal opportunity to display their

intellectual power and, therefore, to be considered in the above calculations. Races that immigrated predominantly in the last century will be less handicapped than those which have only recently immigrated in large numbers. It is very difficult, however to know how much weight to place upon this modifying influence.

Another source of error is the fact that certain nationalities or races seem to have natural inclinations and desires to follow in disproportionate numbers one kind of activity or occupation and are content to let other people rise to those positions which make them "the best-known men and women of the United States." As Dr. Woods states, the Jews could not be expected to show as large a percentage, since they largely turn their attention to the banking, wholesale and retail trades, in which they have been very successful, but in which eminence is not correspondingly recognized in "Who's Who in America."

No comment is made on Jewish achievement, however, because no Jewish name is among the fifty most common in all four cities, and hence there are not enough numbers for study. But the Irish, by their traditional devotion to politics and their success in attaining the lower ranks of political leadership, would seem to be in line for recognition in large numbers, which they nevertheless do not attain.

In spite of these qualifications, however, it becomes apparent that the statistics above established can not be rejected. Although they do not exactly justify Dr. Woods's conclusions, they at least show that the intellectual achievements of different races vary. They also show that a much more extensive study of the subject must be made before any conclusions can be established as final.

We believe, therefore, that Dr. Woods's conclusion—that "there have been a few notable exceptions, but broadly speaking all our very capable men of the present day have been engendered from the Anglo-Saxon element already here before the beginning of the nineteenth century"—should be modified. A sounder conclusion and, in fact, the only one that could be reached through the results established above, would be this: Achievement in those activities represented in "Who's Who in America" is acquired disproportionately by stocks predominantly Teutonic in comparison with the Irish.